

Raised Bill No. 5322: AN ACT CONCERNING THE CREATION OF A HUMAN SERVICES
PERMIT AND A REQUIREMENT THAT SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKERS CONDUCT HOME
VISITS DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR

Education Committee

Submitted By: Miriam Lewis, LCSW

I Miriam Lewis, LCSW, and school social worker for the past 14 years oppose Bill NO. 4322. As trained school social workers (and some of us licensed clinicians) we have the expertise and skills to provide appropriate interventions to our students in school. It is unacceptable and insulting for you to decide "human service workers" who have a bachelor's degree and some experience or have taken some college course in human services, sociology, psychology, etc.. are qualified to provide the ever growing mental health needs of our students. If the State of CT is dealing with a shortage of staff to address the social, emotional, mental health and behavioral needs of our students then they need to increase school budgets to hire more school social workers and school psychologist to address the needs of our students or open more school-based health clinics with clinicians.

As a mother of 5 children in the school system, 2 of which that have either an IEP or 504 accommodations, I would not want my children being serviced by unqualified individuals who do not have the experience or proper training to work with them. We need to be thinking about the quality of care not just filling spots for shortages

On another note, it is unacceptable to mandate home visits for all students on our caseloads, we have our hands filled with in building demands. Home visits should be done on a case by case basis, based on need of students and families. Many school social workers are the only ones in their buildings and are dealing with mandated and non-mandated clients, let's give them the support they need and not add items to their to- do list.

It is unacceptable for those that do not directly do our job or live in our world to create these bills based on what they think the needs and interventions should be, rather than asking us who are on the frontlines. I respectfully oppose this bill.